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**Andrew Huse (AH):** Well, today is May 11th, 2004. My name is Andrew Huse, program assistant for the Florida Studies Center. Today, we continue a series of interviews in our studio here in the Tampa campus library, with USF faculty, students, staff and alumni, in order to commemorate 50 years of university history. Today, I'll be interviewing John Greer, who came to USF in 1968.

**John Greer (JG):** Nineteen sixty-seven I entered.

AH: Sixty-seven. He came as a student and, currently he serves on the board for the foundation. And thanks for being here, John.

JG: Well, thank you.

AH: I guess, first, let's just start about what brought you to USF? When did you first hear about it and consider coming?

JG: The University of South Florida was a relatively new school when I was in high school and considering different places that I might attend college. My older sister had come to the University of South Florida about the same time Interstate four was opened up, connecting my hometown, Winter Park, with Tampa. And my familiarity with the campus and the ease of going back and forth to home combined to make it a good, logical choice for me.

AH: So, academically, what were you interested in when you first arrived?

JG: You know, I don't think I really was much interested in anything, academically, when I first arrived. I had a fuzzy notion of what college was about. I knew that it was something that was expected of me and that I expected of myself. But I really didn't have a focus on academics when I came to the university, as probably shows in my transcripts.

AH: Well, you probably weren't alone there. Certainly, there's a lot of students that arrived that, you know, needed some direction. What were your first—obviously, you probably visited the campus before you were a student here, while your sister was, right?

JG: Yes, I did, on several occasions.

AH: So what were your impressions of the campus when you first saw it?

JG: The campus was pretty stark in those days. The buildings were widely spaced; they were all in the post-Cold War, bomb shelter architecture. It was not a very inviting place from that standpoint. But there was a little center of activity around the dormitories, particularly the Alpha, Beta, Gamma dormitories that were the older, more traditional dormitories, together with the student center. I had some interest in theater. There was an active group here, Theater USF, that had its own little subculture that I found to be very engaging. They did have a course of study in political science with public administration as an emphasis. And that was my particular course of study that I focused on. My father had been in municipal administration after a career in the military, and it looked like interesting work and also offered a possibility of postgraduate work in law or further study in the area of political science or public administration, which I never got around to.

AH: So it sounds like, if you couldn't pick a course of study right at the beginning, it sounds like you had really wide interests. You know, you had theater on the one hand, political science on the other. But tell us a little more; you talked about a subculture in theater. What did you find there? Describe to us what it was like.

JG: In my freshman year, I went for tryouts at Theater USF and was cast in the production of *Twelfth Night*<sup>1</sup>. It was a relatively minor role but nonetheless immersed me in this really interesting group of people. Theater people are characters in both senses of the word, and they really are very engaging, creative, artistic people, as a general rule, and people that are fun to be around.

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<sup>1</sup>*Twelfth Night, or What You Will* is a comedy written by William Shakespeare. The first recorded performance of the play was on February 2nd of 1602. The play follows the chaotic exploits of twins Viola, disguised as a man named Cesario, and Sebastian, who Viola believes to have died in the shipwreck that stranded them in Illyria.

AH: So what were the particular quirks among this clique of folks? I mean, obviously, everyone's a little quirky, but were there any rituals, pranks?

JG: No, it really wasn't that kind of thing. What you were more likely to find was a kind of a coffee house culture. They seemed to share an interest in music and in the theater itself. They were constantly playing a role, whether they were engaged in a production or not. And just very engaging, fun people.

AH: So, on the other end of the spectrum, what was your coursework in political science like?

JG: My first course in political science was an 8:00 AM class with Dr. Roger Nichols, and I think I probably made it to three classes during the course of that term. Dr. Nichols kindly failed me, and I had to repeat the course, which I did with him at a more reasonable hour for a freshman student who lay away from home, and did much better the second time around.

AH: Well, in your defense, we were in the quarter system at the time, so there would've been less classes to begin with, not the sixteen weeks.

JG: Yes, that's true. We were on, essentially, 10-week quarters that were a bit more intense during that 10-week stretch. And the subject matter I found fascinating, still do. But there's good reason why institutions like Duke University are getting rid of 8:00 AM classes these days.

AH: Hey, even the cartoons in the student newspaper used to make fun of the 8:00 AM class.

JG: With good reason.

AH: Yeah. So it kind of sounds like you got the best of both worlds, in a way. I mean, you got immersed into the theater here and there, and then you had the political science on the other end. Obviously, the late '60s was a time when the culture was rapidly changing; this counter-culture was starting to emerge. What was campus like, then? Do you remember any evidence of politicization around campus?

JG: It actually seemed to take root during the period of time that I was a student here. I think, prior to '67, when I entered, the campus had been a relatively quiet place. The university administration, particularly the student affairs part of the university administration, operated

under the concept of *in loco parentis*<sup>2</sup>. They literally viewed themselves as standing in the shoes of the student's parents and took those responsibilities seriously and, much to the dismay of the students, seemed to also assert the rights of parenthood. So the Vietnam War was heating up. There was a lot of pressure due to the draft, on male students in particular. If you didn't stay in phase—complete your freshman year in 12 months, your sophomore year in 12 months—you were subject to the draft. And being subject to the draft at that time could have rather dire consequences, so it was something that people took very seriously and tried to stay on task, not out of any love of the academics but because it was vastly preferable to the alternative.

Increasingly, as the anti-war movement began to get more traction nationally and internationally, the university followed in step. And this campus was not as radical as many of the campuses around the country, partially because it still, at that time, had a very high commuter base and a relatively low full-time student population. The commuter base would go home in the evening instead of engaging in the campus concern for the issues of international affairs and the wars of the world. So we weren't as politicized as some of the other campuses, but the anti-war movement was something that many students took quite seriously, the administration took quite seriously. We had an occasion in, either late 1970 or early 1971, when a rally was broken up by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's department. It was an amazing thing to see.

It had been a relatively mild rally, and someone pulled a plug on the band that they had at the rally. I think there might've been someone who cast some sort of threat if anyone pulled the plug again. And within minutes, there were literally dozens of Hillsborough County Sheriff's cars that descended on the site of the rally and broke it up, and I think there were a few arrests made. But, compared to the level of violence that had occurred at other campuses, it was relatively mild, relatively tame, but nonetheless serious to the people who were concerned about such things.

AH: Yeah, and I think you were referring to the Celebration of Life concert. It was October 30th, I believe. And it was set to go late into the night, and then, somewhere around 2:00 AM, I guess USF administrators actually got an injunction against this rally. And I'd like to bring up a couple of things that kind of led up to that because, first of all, you had Kent State<sup>3</sup> that happened a few months before.

JG: Yes.

AH: Tell us about that. What was the reaction like?

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<sup>2</sup>*In loco parentis* is Latin for "in the place of a parent;" the phrase refers to the legal responsibility of a person or organization to assume the functions of a child's parent.

<sup>3</sup>On May 4, 1970, twenty-eight Ohio National Guardsmen fired approximately 67 rounds at unarmed college students resulting in the death of four students and the wounding of nine others. The shooting was preceded by three days of protests. On the second day of protest, May 2, Mayor Satrom felt that local officials were incapable of dealing with future unrest and asked for the National Guards to be sent to Kent.

JG: I think Kent State was a significant turning point for people who had been lukewarm in their protest of the war. I think that there was, at first, a general disbelief and then outrage that such a thing could happen on a college campus anywhere in this country. The images of national guardsmen coming in and opening fire on students conducting what, arguably, was a peaceful protest on campus was something shocking to students, faculty, and probably to parents around the country who had children they thought were safe, that now could very well have been in harm's way. It was a galvanizing moment.

AH: And what were the reactions here on campus?

JG: There was, around the state of Florida, and the country generally, a movement to close campuses with student strikes. Both the University of Florida and Florida State [University] had levels of activity that they felt it necessary to close the campus. We had a bit of a moderating influence here with some of the faculty who were well-regarded, who posed the argument that, if you're going to close places in protest, the places you shouldn't close are places like universities, where the exchange of ideas and potential solutions to the issues that we face could very well be found. That argument seemed to resonate with enough students that there was a symbolic student strike, staying out of classes for a period of about a week, which seemed to gain traction with a substantial number of students and faculty. But there was not an effort to shut down the university as a furtherance of that protest. It just didn't seem to be the appropriate thing to do, to both the students and the faculty here at the university; it doesn't indicate any less fervor in the protest of what happened at Kent State [University] and the issues that created that. It was just a different way of responding.

AH: And another event that kind of led up to this Celebration of Life, really, probably one of the most chaotic moments in an otherwise moderate campus was an alleged drug pusher was killed off campus by a local policeman, a guy who called himself Sunshine Mike. His real name was Roy Rettig. It happened a week or two before the Celebration of Life and a month or two after Kent State. Do you remember anything about that?

JG: Yeah, if I recall correctly, that occurred at the "crazy corner" or in the neighborhood of the crazy corner over by Nebraska Avenue. It was something that wasn't really related to the campus; I don't recall that the individual was a student, although, apparently had some contact with students who frequented some of the same bars and night spots. I don't know that that particularly enflamed the campus in any regard. There were always people with their own agenda, who would latch onto any pretext to enflame anything. But I don't really see that as having been much of a core issue of campus life and having little, if anything, to do with the political movement on campus related to the Vietnam War.

AH: So, at what point did you decide to run for student government president?

JG: It was between my junior and senior year. Campus life was, very much, a part of my life. I had lived on campus my first two years. I married between my sophomore and junior year.

AH: Yeah, let's talk about that. She was a student here?

JG: She was a student here until shortly before the time that we married. Actually, Kathy and I had dated in high school. She followed me here to the University of South Florida. A year later, we got married, and we're still married today. She took a little longer to finish her studies. She graduated in 1996, so I frequently dropped the information that my wife was graduating with the class of '96 and leave it to the listener to draw their own conclusions.

AH: (laughs) I suspect there were children in the interim?

JG: Actually, not until long after. The kids are grown and gone now, so that has been a lot of time. But it's 35 years in a couple of months.

AH: Well, congratulations.

JG: Well, thank you. Thank you. But you'd asked about—

AH: Well, actually, before we go there—I didn't realize you lived in the dorms. Tell me a little bit about dorm life. What were your first impressions moving in? What was the scene like?

JG: When I came to the university as an entering freshman, there was a tremendous demand for student housing, and there wasn't any. We lived in a room in Alpha, probably no larger than the studio we're in now, perhaps 14-by-20 or so. They had originally built the rooms to be shared by two students; we were three in a room, a three-high bunk bed. And they were relatively traditional dormitories, baths at the end of the hall. And it was somewhat cramped living quarters. They improved that my sophomore year. Or, perhaps because I was now another year further down the road, I got back to where I was in a room for two instead of three. But it did have its challenges. The fellows that I roomed with, my first year were, one from New York, one from Ohio, the three of us altogether about as different as any three people could be. And yet, we managed fine through our freshman year.

AH: So a triple bunk bed, then?

JG: A triple bunk bed. As I recall, I was in the middle.

AH: Okay, yeah. It sounds pretty cramped. As I understand, there was people living in the lounges, et cetera, too?

JG: Yeah. It was, pretty much, any place that you could put up a bed, they called a dorm room. The food services were conducted in two areas: one in the Andros Complex, one in the Argos Complex. Ray King was the head of student housing at the time, a man who had to struggle with having to serve a constituency about twice the size of that which his facilities had been built for. They did a passable job. There weren't the options for off-campus dining that there are today. So you just made the best of what was available.

AH: Yeah, well, as I understand it, the only greater target than the Vietnam War was the food and housing situations here on campus.

JG: It was the subject of a good bit of discussion among the resident students, as I'm sure it still is today.

AH: Let me see, moving up to student government. Obviously, it's a tumultuous time here on campus and everything. What did you think you brought to the table? And how did you make your decision? Did you think about it for long? When did you finally arrive to that?

JG: Well, I had been involved in student government for a year prior to running for student body president. A good friend of mine, a fraternity brother, had been president of the student government the preceding year. That, actually, was probably a factor that worked against me, in that it wasn't considered sharing if two guys from the same fraternity were to run for an office back to back. But that was something that seemed to have been overcome. There were a number of individuals who, I think, were considering career tracks in law or in government, who viewed student government as good practice. As the '60s got towards the end, student government actually became somewhat more than good practice; it seemed to take on a power because the media was quite focused on activities on campus. And it seemed as though the things that were happening on campus really were having an impact on events of the country and the world. So it was something that was interesting; it was exciting. If you took it with a reasonable degree of sincerity, you felt that you could have an impact on life both on campus and beyond. If you viewed it simply as something to build your resume towards law school or whatever career track you had in mind, I suppose it was good for that as well.

AH: So how did you serve initially, for that year before you became president?

JG: I actually started in my freshman year on the inter-residence hall council, which was a representative group of people elected in their dormitories to represent a particular hall in the dormitories, and then moved onto—

AH: Well, let's talk about that just for a second. What were some of the issues that came up in these meetings?

JG: Oh, well, that's when you got to meet Ray King, because you'd talk about food, and you'd talk about, Why are we three in a room? and, Could we get more chairs in the lounge so that we could watch *All in the Family*<sup>4</sup> and *Laugh-In*<sup>5</sup>? Those were the burning issues on inter-residence hall council. From inter-residence hall council, one of my friends, Steve Anderson, was student body president. The year before, he invited me to serve as a member of his cabinet, and I did so for the year that he was president of the student body. And, during that period of time [I] developed enough of an interest that it moved me to eventually run for student body president myself.

AH: And let's talk about the fraternity for a second. How did you become involved in that? How'd you hear about it, et cetera?

JG: Fraternities then were pretty much the same as today, on campus. They would hold rush. The rush events were largely, you look at us, we'll look at you, see if we've got a fit; if you like our group, affiliate with it. You'd then pledge. There was a moderate amount of hazing, never anything—at least in the group that I was with—that rose to the level of being dangerous or in duress. I think that there was, actually, a strong feeling among some of the senior members of my fraternity that that was not what they wanted to be about. And so, there may have been others that were better and others that were worse, in that regard. The fraternities essentially conducted social functions. In our case, we had an annual ball and a couple of other major social functions during the year. And you spent quite a bit of time, in between, socializing informally with the people you had chosen to affiliate with.

AH: Care to share any of the hazing stories?

JG: You know, there just really weren't any serious cases of hazing.

AH: That's become kind of a dirty word now, but somewhat unfairly.

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<sup>4</sup>*All in the Family* is an American sitcom TV-series that was originally broadcast on CBS from 1971 to 1979, at which point the show was transformed into *Archie Bunker's Place*.

<sup>5</sup>*Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*, often called *Laugh-In*, is an American sketch comedy show that aired from 1968 to 1973.

JG: Well, the hazing was not looked at too favorably even in my day. I think that some people had seen Hollywood's representation of what a fraternity pledgship could be like and thought that that was interesting. There's always a ritual of passage from being on the outside to being on the inside. I remember more things like the pledge class going on a treasure hunt, clues from one place to another around campus, and I recall one of the clues was like, "B-17." And you wonder, what's B-17? Well, someone did figure out that the mailboxes that were in the dormitories at the time had two dials on them, one with letters and one with numbers. So you had to, then, find out which mailboxes belonged to all of the active members of the fraternity, and then go try that combination on them. And when you hit the right mailbox, you got the clue that took you to the next place. I remember the last clue was, "U R there." And we looked around, and we knew we weren't "there," but then someone figured out that "U R" meant University Restaurant, and that's where everyone was waiting to greet the pledge class and have a beer and something to eat at the end of the scavenger hunt.

AH: Yeah, it's kind of a legendary spot, you know, for relaxation after or between classes, the University Restaurant. What do you remember about that place?

JG: The University Restaurant was open late, until two in the morning. That made it one of only two or three choices between midnight and two. It kind of had a grown-up atmosphere about it. It was a spot that was close to campus, and there seemed to be certain people who gravitated and sort of held court there. One of my good friends, Pete Atkinson, used to be, if you wanted to see Pete, all you had to do was go to the University Restaurant between midnight and two. He'd be there with a cup of coffee and a chicken sandwich. There were characters who just kind of identified with the University Restaurant.

AH: Specialized in Italian food, I hear?

JG: Indeed. The Scaglione brothers were the proprietors of the restaurant. It was reputed that you could run into underworld figures and such there. I never personally ran into any underworld figures. I suspect that that was just part of the lore of the restaurant, just part of the image that made the place interesting.

AH: So then, moving back to the presidency, it seemed like Steve Anderson had a pretty good run, you know, a pretty nice tenure, as far as—it's funny—

JG: Steve was a little ahead of the power curve. Things were relatively quiet. He was kind of the last president to enjoy a peaceful tenure for quite some time.

AH: So that implies that yours wasn't so peaceful. When did you run? And when was the campaign?

JG: You know—

AH: And what was your platform?

JG: I think that campaign was in the spring. And there was a host of candidates. Of the candidates in the campaign, I was probably the most radical of the moderates, as opposed to the most moderate of the radicals. I think the race probably started with six or seven candidates and narrowed down to a run-off. The run-off election was hotly contested, both before and after the votes were cast. There were allegations of improprieties in voting. The student court heard the case, and, like George Bush, I ended up president when it was all over.

AH: Uh-huh. When all the dust settled. And you came in at the time when the presidency of the university was shifting.

JG: Yes.

AH: John Allen retired. It was kind of stop-and-go action. In the fall, he surprised everyone saying he was going to retire; then the board of regents said, Not so fast. What do you remember about this? You know, I've heard rumors that he was actively retired by the board of regents. You know, the conventional story was that he retired. Do you have any insight there?

JG: I think Dr. Allen was at a point where retirement was inevitable. It was a question of timing. I think that Dr. Allen wanted, very much, to not be in a position of being forced to retire, either by activities on the campus or by the board of regents. And one of the things that I felt was important for me to do, as student body president, was to maintain an atmosphere that allowed him the opportunity to retire while not under very active protests or very active demand for his retirement. I don't think he would've responded well to an active demand for his retirement. And yet, I think everyone knew that the university would be moving on to a new president shortly. And getting to the point where we could move on, I think, was important for the university. And allowing him an opportunity to retire of his own choice, on his own schedule, may, very well, have enabled that to happen sooner rather than later.

AH: You know, you referred to his retirement being inevitable. Why was it?

JG: Oh, he was at the end of a very long career. His tenure at the university had been, largely, the man who started and built the university. He had fulfilled that function. The campus was very well along in its development of physical plant. The faculty was doing very well. There were a number of notable people who had been attracted to the faculty. Enrollment was skyrocketing, both because of the demographics of the Baby Boomers and the pressure, particularly on the male students, to attend college rather than subject themselves to immediate availability for the draft. And Dr. Allen's job was pretty much done here, and it seemed to be a time for someone who would take the foundation that he had put down and move the university in—not so much a different direction but to move it forward from the platform that Dr. Allen had laid. He was a man who was, I think, very sincere about the university being a place where the academics were paramount. Perhaps to the point that he didn't appreciate some of the other things that other people—students, faculty—felt should be a part of university life and the university experience.

AH: Athletics would be one.

JG: Athletics is one of them. The university was also expanding its graduate programs in a number of areas. It wasn't just a liberal arts school anymore. The engineering department had gained a good bit of recognition and prominence. The business school was beginning to show more prominence than it had earlier. Dr. Allen was an astronomer. We had a conservatory in the golf course and a planetarium located in one of the buildings here at the university. His mark on those things was very prominent, but I think as the university reached a certain point in its adolescence, it was time to just change guiding hands.

AH: Uh-huh. So what were your impressions of Dean Harris?

JG: Harris Dean.

AH: Harris Dean, yes.

JG: Dean Dean. (laughs)

AH: Yeah. Obviously, he was a familiar face. What were your impressions there?

JG: He was the vice president of academic affairs and took over as interim president when Dr. Allen retired. Harris Dean was a man who was well regarded by students and faculty alike. If I have a criticism of Dr. Dean, it would be that he seemed to consider it his obligation to continue in Dr. Allen's plan when he became interim president of the university. I think other people—faculty members, the students, the community—felt that it was time for change. And so, Dr. Dean was kind of trapped between his loyalty to the Allen administration and a tremendous

momentum for change that came from the community, the faculty and the students. So they were ready to move on.

AH: So when you were student government president was Cecil Mackey brought in? By the time that you were graduating, or—?

JG: There was a search conducted during the time that I was student body president. The search committee consisted of faculty and students, as well as other interested parties, the administrative staff of the university and, I'm sure, people from the community. There were a number of candidates that were interested in the position. Dr. Mackey was chosen as the second president of the University of South Florida, and I think [he] immediately brought a change in focus to the university.

AH: So how did the focus change then? I mean just from what you saw?

JG: I think that he kind of viewed what was here, not as an accomplishment, not a task completed, but as an opening hand. He looked at what we had, and hadn't had to go through the battles and the suffering to build what was here. He could simply accept it as a starting point and then plan, perhaps on a much larger scale for the future, than people who had been a part of the campus up to that point. He seemed to have a good bit of vision and, I think, was very influential in expanding graduate programs here at the university and beginning the second wave of construction of facilities here at the university. He got kind of a honeymoon from the faculty and the students that enabled things to settle down a little bit during the next couple of years, which, coincidentally was about the time the Vietnam War ended, and the whole country seemed to breathe a sigh of relief. And so, I think he was able to do some good things and focus on what it took to move the university to the next level.

AH: Uh-huh. Well, now, shifting back to student government president. John Greer, the candidate, what did you run on? You know, your platform. And in the end, looking back on it at the end of your tenure, did you get done what you'd set out to get done? What were the obstacles, the challenges?

JG: You know, I don't really, so much, remember what my vision was before because events seemed to be dictated by things beyond my control once I became president of the student body. You spent almost all of your time responding rather than initiating, and responding to events like Kent State. There were some things that were happening that changed campus life. One of the things that I had been an advocate of was a stronger resident student campus life. Among the things that we looked to, to do that, was getting more involved in intercollegiate athletics. Frank Winkles, who had preceded my tenure in the student government by a couple of years, had really

been instrumental in setting the stage for intercollegiate sports on a major level, intercollegiate basketball.

And, during the time that I was student body president we actually opened our first season, brought the first student athletes who were at the major level of college sports to the campus. And I think that had some impact on campus life and some impact on the relationship of the campus to the community. There were people who, otherwise, might've cared little or nothing about the University of South Florida, who might've had an interest in intercollegiate basketball or an interest when their school came to play at the University of South Florida. Our opening game was against the University of Florida. And I suspect there were probably more University of Florida grads in the stands than University of South Florida grads. I say in the stands—it was the seats at Curtis Hixon Hall<sup>6</sup> as I recall—so there weren't any stands. There wasn't any place on campus to play at that time. The Sun Dome was still years in the future.

AH: Sure.

JG: So that was one aspect of increasing campus life. Married student housing was a relatively major concern. There were an increasing number of married students, particularly as veterans returned from Vietnam. They were a little bit older. They were on the *G.I. Bill*<sup>7</sup>, so they were able to attend school instead of having to immediately engage in careers. And we had no place on campus to provide housing for married students.

AH: Well, you were one of those married students, right, by then?

JG: I was a married student, and I lived off campus, initially in one of the off-campus apartments and later in a mobile home in what's now known as Suitcase City<sup>8</sup>. At the time, it was just kind of a rural neighborhood out there, mostly populated by students and blue-collar working people. But a few years later, I like to think that because of the movement we started, they actually did build some married student housing on campus. I don't even know if they still have any active married student housing on campus. It seemed to be something that was a kind of transitory need. It filled a need for a short period of time largely related, I think, to returning veterans from the Vietnam War. It may not even be something that would have any appeal today.

AH: Any other issues we should cover before we move on from student government president? Anything else that stands out in your mind?

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<sup>6</sup>Curtis Hixon Hall was an indoor sports arena and special events center that was located at 600 Ashley Drive in downtown Tampa. The hall was demolished in 1993 and converted into a public park.

<sup>7</sup>The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the *G.I. Bill*, was a law that provided a range of benefits for returning World War II veterans, commonly referred to as G.I.s.

<sup>8</sup>Suitcase City is a name given by Hillsborough County locals to the impoverished and crime-ridden area just west of the USF campus.

JG: The university had been enabled by a legislative act that established the university zoning district around the university itself. And, in their wisdom, one of the things the legislature had done was prohibited alcoholic beverages within that zoning district. Alcoholic beverages in the dormitories was considered to be quite an offense at that time. It was one of those things that they warned you sternly, as a freshman, that you might very well be expelled from the university for—not that I ever knew anyone who was, but they warned you sternly nonetheless. With the advent of the Vietnam War and its draft affecting people 18 years and older, there were a number of areas in the law that were examined and addressed with regard to rights of people of 18 years and older.

The argument, of course, was: If you'll give me a gun and send me off to Southeast Asia to make a decision of whether or not I pull the trigger and kill someone, you probably ought to allow me to have a drink. You probably ought to allow me to vote for the people who are sending me there. And, during that period of time, on the more significant issue, the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. That had been a campus issue that was certainly not of my doing, but we put our two cents in, along with people from campuses around the rest of the country that may, very well, have had an impact on that occurring.

The Florida Legislature also reduced the drinking age to 18. As I recall, the provision went into effect about three weeks before my 21st birthday. So, with the drinking age being reduced, campuses began to see a popping up of things like Rathskellers<sup>9</sup>. The University of Florida had a Rathskeller. The idea was to create a pub-like atmosphere somewhere on campus, where people of legal drinking age could go and have a beer. And we, at the University of South Florida, were prohibited from doing that, by this special act of the legislature. Lobbying the amendment of that act was one of the things that we did during my tenure as student body president. Shortly after I completed my term, we opened The Empty Keg on campus, empty no more. And I assume that they still have some place on campus where they serve alcohol. Although, perhaps not, as they've raised the drinking age back to 21. It might not be appropriate any longer.

AH: Yeah, several years ago, they got rid of it. They're talking about bringing it back. But of course, it was known as The Empty Keg because they couldn't serve beer, correct?

JG: Until such time as we had the legislative act enacted, the keg was empty. But we built it in anticipation.

AH: And there was a Rathskeller.

JG: And it became not The Empty Keg but The Keg.

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<sup>9</sup>A term for taverns, nightclubs, bars, and similar establishments.

AH: Any other issues that stand out from your tenure?

JG: No, as I mentioned in our pre-interview, the brain cells are burning at an alarming rate. And, without a reminder or a little prodding, there are a lot of things that just don't stand out today as something worth mentioning.

AH: So how much time went by between your end as student government president and your graduation?

JG: I graduated in 1972.

AH: Okay.

JG: So it was a little over a year. By the time I graduated, I had actually left campus and was in Tallahassee for a short period. On leaving the university, I joined the staff of Dr. Roger Nichols, that political science professor who failed me my freshman year, as one of his staff members on the house education committee, working for Terrell Sessums<sup>10</sup>, who was the chairman of the education committee and the incoming speaker of the house. I worked with his staff for a year and, subsequent to that, with Louis de la Parte<sup>11</sup>—for whom there is an institute on the university named—as his administrative assistant for a couple of years.

AH: Yeah, and we also have the Sessums Mall right outside here. So two real heavyweights. Sessums was speaker of the house, was he?

JG: Sessums was speaker of the house. De la Parte was president pro-tempore of the senate. At the time that I went to work for Sessums, he was the chairman of the house education committee, and De la Parte was the chairman of the ways and means committee. I suppose that I should mention that, during the time that I was student body president, I took about a three-week sabbatical and traveled with Lawton Chiles<sup>12</sup> who was, at the time, the state senator running for US Senate. I drove the camper on a segment of his campaign from Tallahassee to Tampa and met some very interesting people during that time, enjoyed the time spent tremendously. There was a group of fellows: Steve Anderson and myself, Frank Quesada, who is now a judge in the Sixth Judicial Circuit, [and] I believe Jim Croge(??), who is a lobbyist and consultant in Tallahassee after a rather lengthy career with the legislature. We tended to affiliate ourselves together into a group that worked on the Chiles campaign that was involved in student politics, that attended

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<sup>10</sup>Thomas Terrell Sessums was the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives from 1972 through 1974.

<sup>11</sup>Louis A. de la Parte (1929 – 2008) served in the Florida Legislature from 1962 to 1974.

<sup>12</sup>Lawton Manor Chiles Jr. (1930 – 1998) was a Florida politician who served as US Senator from 1971 to 1989 and Governor of Florida from 1991 to 1998.

seminars together, classes and so forth, and had a very good relationship among us that, I think, kept us all interested in campus activities and life.

AH: So how did it feel, becoming part of all of these different—doing staff work and becoming part of campaigns and such? What was that like, for someone still working on his undergraduate degree?

JG: It was a tremendous experience. The people that I had the opportunity to work with, Lawton Chiles, Terrell Sessums, Louis de la Parte, Mallory Horn, who I worked with who was president of the senate at the time. They were wonderful people, tremendous public servants. They were, occasionally, all of them, victimized by a press that's cynical of even the finest of people, of the best of intentions. But I don't think you could've found better people to work under and study in lessons preparing for life. I did conclude, after about three years in that environment, that, what they did in the course of public service was not sufficiently rewarding for me for the price that they paid. I concluded that a career in law was not in my future because I simply didn't care for what people who did that for a living had to do every day. I found that I much preferred the enjoyment that I had when I worked in home construction with a small contractor in my hometown summers during my first couple of years of college. And I found that, something that rewarded me at the end of each day, with something that wasn't there at the beginning of the day, was the kind of thing that really appealed to me. Slaving over a legislative act for three months during a session, only to slave over repealing that act the subsequent session, was just not my idea of being productive, wasn't my idea of fun.

AH: Sure, or to see it amended to death before it was passed.

JG: Yeah, and I'm glad someone does it, and I'm glad it's not me.

AH: (laughs) Yeah, well, it's like Bismarck talking about, you don't want to see laws being made; it looks like sausage, something like that<sup>13</sup>. So then you got into housing. And, as I understand, over time, became very successful. There are several articles in your file, here, about builder of the year and these things. You did most of your construction in the Tampa area?

JG: Yeah. After I returned from Tallahassee, I took a position with the Local Homebuilders Association, which was a nice little transitional move. It gave me an opportunity to use some of what I'd learned in the legislative process to their advantage and working on the issues that were important to them. It gave me entrée to meet people who were involved in the building and construction business here, and some time to learn the craft and identify, specifically, what I'd like to do. So it was a good transition for me and led to my doing some subcontract work for a

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<sup>13</sup>"Laws, like sausages, cease to inspire respect in proportion as we know how they are made" has been misattributed to Bismarck.

couple of years and then studying for and passing the contractor's licensing exam and, thereafter, building homes.

AH: So, in a way, the political science and all the political work that you had done kind of provided some networking so that when you did get into contracting, you had contacts and things like that.

JG: In fact, if I were counseling someone today who wanted to be in the homebuilding business, I would tell them, "Don't go to the school of construction, don't become an engineer. Take a course of study in political science." Because, if you want to be at the top of the business, your tools are not a hammer, and saw, and a measuring tape. Your tools are a codebook, a set of zoning regulations, a county commission meeting agenda, staying on top of new concepts in urban planning and design, knowing whether or not the demographics are appropriate to the kind of housing that you anticipate building. So a major in government and a minor in business would probably be what I would consult—and hire the guys who work the hammer and nails.

AH: Let me see. We've got a couple of minutes left on this tape. One of the things that I talked about in the articles about you too is, you know, you were just mentioning demographics, choosing a product that would be appropriate for that area. So it sounds like you really—there's so much more than just picking a design and building a house. It's all about location and, like you said, demographics. The way McDonald's will case an area for a long time before they finally pick the intersection where they're going to build their outlet. So, in that way, you were talking about codebooks and all these other things; those things had a huge impact on the direction your career took in the housing.

JG: Well, sure, and Tampa was a great place to be because it's a city that has added jobs, attracted new families, has been prosperous over the years, there's a lot of variety and demand for housing types. We have seasonal residents; we have retiree residents; we have primary housing; we have move-up housing and executive housing. And, today, we're starting to look at redevelopment. There's a big emphasis on renewing the urban core. And one of the programs here at the University of South Florida, through the School of Architecture, addresses that today. And I don't think that's the kind of study that was even available at the time that I was a student here. So I'm certainly not the only one who's recognized that a lot more planning is a part of building new communities and attracting new housing than simply going out and building the same old thing that Dad and Granddad built.

AH: Well, and it also seems like they really lacked—you know, your predecessors, or at least a lot of them, really lack the nuance that you have, as far as choosing to build a public housing project next to Ybor City and still wanting Ybor City to be some sort of economic powerhouse. We have urban renewal that, really, lacked any kind of subtlety and didn't really do what it set out to do. And here we are, you know, 40 years later and seriously talking about doing what they were talking about decades ago.

JG: You know, you have to forgive them a little bit. Nobody had a crystal ball. Nobody imagined the scope of growth that we would have here in Tampa. If the guys who laid out Fort Brooke had said, You know, what we need here is a 20-mile, eight-lane Boulevard reserved for future residents, the other two guys would've looked at him and said, What? It just wasn't going to happen. What they needed was about a nine-foot-wide dirt path that got from the front of the fort to the trading post.

AH: Sure. Let's hold that thought for volume two, shall we?

*Track 1 ends; track 2 begins*

AH: —doing a romp through history with John Greer. Let's just talk a little more about housing. Tampa, obviously, was a great place to do the business you did. In your mind, what are some of the responsibilities of someone in your line of work?

JG: Well, it's actually changing and evolving. There's, as we have more and more people occupying the same amount of space, it becomes increasingly important that we design and build in ways that meet our needs and don't offend others. When I say "offend," I don't mean just personally; I mean in a much larger sense, as well. Tampa is a finite amount of land, and it seems to have an infinite amount of demand. The responsibility needs to start in the public sector. And we've taken some big strides there. We, today, acquire a lot of land to be held publicly and to be either preserved or utilized in the public interest.

The voters in Hillsborough County have been very willing to tax themselves for the Environmental Lands Acquisition Program and similar initiatives. And, today, a substantial portion of Hillsborough County is in public ownership, and more every time we turn around. There also has been an evolution in the last 30 years of zoning in the area here, to where it's not just zoning anymore. It's now comprehensive planning that precedes zoning and then zoning on a more specific basis, right down to the eventual approval of plans for development, yet becoming more specific as we go. I chuckle every time I hear someone talk about unregulated growth. I can't imagine anything that's more regulated than growth in the area, here.

The path for a piece of farmland in the rural services area, in Hillsborough County, to become a new project, a new subdivision, a new community, these days is probably five or six years in length. If you select a piece of property that's already been through the first couple of hurdles and is correctly postured in the comprehensive plan, you've cut that down to where it's only two or three years in the process of being planned, reviewed, amended to ensure that it complies with whatever our local government officials have decided are the current public priorities. I received

an award from the planning commission for a community—oh, back in about 1985—for a subdivision that, today, would be marked as the antithesis of what they're trying to do.

But expert opinion, at that time, was that that was the best. And, as we come, now 20 years down the road, expert opinion is that we have all of that that we need; we need to do something else. So it's a very dynamic field. We're going to see a new wave of development in Tampa that is an old wave; the redevelopment of a number of areas within the Hillsborough County and Tampa markets. There was recently an effort undertaken by a group of very prominent people from within the community to assemble and authorize the redevelopment of land in urban neighborhoods that would've represented about 5,000 units of new housing. And it failed for lack of being sufficiently explained to acquire the political support that it needed to succeed.

AH: Was this the Civitas?

JG: The Civitas. And it doesn't mean it was a bad idea—

AH: Certainly not.

JG: It just means that it's either a little premature or that it simply didn't gain the acceptance because the people who were putting it together didn't really bring about an understanding of exactly what they were trying to do. I personally thought it was a wonderful effort to have a significant impact on the redevelopment of some of Tampa's older neighborhoods, that sacrificed nothing historic. It offered an opportunity for a substantial increase in tax base without any burden on new public services, simply the revitalization of areas that are already within the boundaries of public services being provided. So we'll see a good bit of that, partially because it's time for that kind of thing to happen.

Partially because Tampa, really, was a very small place until after World War II. So the housing stock that was built immediately after World War II is now reaching the point where it's obsolete and due for replacement. And there just was very little obsolete housing stock from pre-World War II Tampa. There will be an endless supply from now on. Every year, something that was built the subsequent year will become obsolete. And so, redevelopment, from this point forward, is going to be a major part of meeting needs for housing, and commercial, and public spaces in Tampa.

AH: Yeah, well, certainly, housing has come a long way since the shell homes of Jim Walter<sup>14</sup> and things like that. And you talk about this dynamic; it really sounds like it's the type of industry where, you know, you cannot stand still because you'll just be falling backwards. There's so many things to keep up with, as far as—you were talking about, before, you know, doing the research on demographics and geographics [sic], et cetera. But now, you have PR coming into play. The Civitas project didn't quite have all of those elements in place, and people seemed to have more questions than showing support. It just sounds like a really challenging industry to be in right now.

JG: It is. And, in the last couple of years, I've pretty much shifted my emphasis from building houses into the development of communities. There reaches a point in one's career when it's time to move from retail to wholesale. And I've pretty much hit that threshold and find that I really prefer, at this point, the development of communities rather than the construction of homes themselves.

AH: So, you know, we were talking before about, you had the period after graduation of really getting your business together and everything. And actually, before I weave and come back to USF or your return and reengagement, we're going to cap some personalities from the old days. You can throw names out there, and let's just talk about some of your impressions.

JG: Sure. We had talked a little about Dr. Allen, who had taken the university from its start, up through the late '60s and had retired at that point. Harris Dean, who, I think could best be characterized as one of the most respected men in the administration by faculty, staff, and students alike. There were some other people who were wonderful people, some who were interesting characters and added to the color of campus life. In my work with student government, I had quite a bit of interface with the people in the student affairs section. Dr. Herbert J. Wunderlich was the dean of students at the time. Dr. Wunderlich was a very interesting character. At the time, I didn't really appreciate how interesting. I think that our impression of Dr. Wunderlich when we were students was that he was rather like Dean Wormer from *Animal House*<sup>15</sup>, that he conspired against the students and was the evil arm of the administration. And yet, I don't think that's what he really was at all. As a matter of fact, I remember engaging in a discussion in his office, on one occasion, about his interests outside the university. He had a great love for his home state of Montana and, in his office, had some Western art from Montana that, at the time, I held little appreciation for. But, as I recall, he may have had paintings by Carl Rungius<sup>16</sup> in his office, just things that, today, the appreciation of the world and people like me are significantly greater than they were then. There was a side to Dean

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<sup>14</sup>Jim Walter shell homes were produced by the *Jim Walter Homes* company between 1946 and 2009. They were called shell homes because the company would complete the exterior of the structure and allow the customer to finish the inside to their liking.

<sup>15</sup>*National Lampoon's Animal House* is a 1978 comedy film about a group of fraternity brothers who decide to challenge their college dean's authority.

<sup>16</sup>Carl Clemens Moritz Rungius (1869 – 1959) was a prominent German-American wildlife artist who produced most of his widely renowned work during of the 20th century.

Wunderlich that wasn't readily apparent if you were a student here, at the time. Dean Wunderlich's counterpart, Dr. Fisher, Maggie Fisher, was dean of women at the time. It sounds quite quaint now, having a dean of men, dean of women. I don't think they do that anymore, do they?

AH: No, I don't think so.

JG: Well, in the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, they were sort of the father and mother figure of the student population. And Dean Fisher was a very, very widely traveled, interesting, intelligent person. She seemed to really, personally care whether or not the students felt that she was doing a good job and being helpful. I know she continued her affiliation with the university some years after she retired, but she was a figure that I'll always remember warmly. Phyllis Marshall, who ran the student center, today the Marshall Center—they called it the University Center at the time. I think that was done intentionally. I honestly believe that they didn't want the students getting the idea that it was their place. Frankly, I don't think they wanted the students to get the idea that the university was their place. Today, I somewhat understand that. I mean, the university is a place for many constituencies: the faculty, the staff, the alumni—an increasing factor here at the University of South Florida—as well as the students.

AH: And research and a lot of big things going on.

JG: Everybody gets their piece in the university now. It's not just for the students. Although, in its simplest form, that's the way we tend to think of it. Some of the other people—after Harris Dean, Dr. Carl Riggs took over as vice president of academic affairs. Dr. Riggs may have been one of the best things that happened to this university during that time frame. He was a thoughtful individual, very well regarded by his faculty, very involved and well regarded by the community. And absolutely brilliant man, he understood the importance of the university's standing in academic institutions and organizations. He never achieved what was one of his loftiest goals, which was to establish a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa here at the university. If they ever do get around to getting a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, it ought to be the Carl Riggs chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. He was just a really, really solid influence on this university. Edgar Kopp, who was the dean of the engineering school, was one of the members of the administration that I spent a good bit of time in discussion with because of my role as student body president. I had no classes in engineering, and yet, he took a very high level of interest in what was going on on campus. He, I think, was regarded somewhat suspiciously by a lot of the faculty because he didn't have a PhD. If Dean Kopp's example is what you take for a measure, I would say a PhD is probably not needed. As Betty Castor later demonstrated in her capacity as president of the university. She, coincidentally, was a classmate of mine.

AH: Oh, really?

JG: We were taking a graduate-level course in public administration: I, as an undergraduate [and] she, as a post-graduate student. Shortly after that, she entered public life, ran for county commission and went on to a very illustrious career that brought her back here to the University of South Florida. So that was always kind of an interesting footnote in my time here as a student, that I shared classes with the president of the university.

AH: Sure, and now running for the senate.

JG: Yes.

AH: And one of the interesting things that, I think, you'd appreciate, is she became a board [member of the] county commissioners. And then, in 1973, she really railed against what she called unregulated growth around the university. She was saying, "You've just got this grab-bag of all these retail outlets everywhere, and it's just a big jumble of stuff." And, of course, she was usually voted against whenever she tried to stop things, and things just proceeded apace. And now, Fowler Avenue, thankfully, widened a few years ago because, until then, it was just a little, minor traffic disaster.

JG: You know, interestingly, Commissioner [Betty] Castor, at the time, County Commissioner Castor, was one of the members of the commission who enjoyed a great deal of support from people in my industry, the homebuilding industry. Her arguments regarding patterns of growth and development made as much sense to us as they did to most everyone else. She was not viewed by people in our industry as being someone who was any kind of a threat; rather, someone whose positions on those matters were well-considered and, in many cases, worthy.

AH: Interesting.

JG: But some of the other folks who were at the university at the time—of course, we talked about Ray King and housing and—

AH: A man of infinite patience, I'm sure.

JG: No doubt. Dick Bowers, who was at the time the athletic director of the university and continues his affiliation with the university today. I don't know if it's widely known, but Dick was a sportsman himself. At one time, I think he actually held the title of the Burma Open Golf Champion, something that he acquired in his travels as a serviceman in his younger days. He really has been a part of this university that has provided a connection over the years and still does today. Quite a character, quite a wonderful man, so glad that he's still part of the university. In my department, the political science department, there was a professor who sticks out in my mind. Sotirios Barber, who had this sort of bushy, Rasputin beard and tended to speak in a way that made you think he was an extremely old and wise man.

But, underneath that beard, I think he was a good bit younger than most people recognized and a very educated and very bright man and very much a calming influence during times of strife on the campus. We talked about Roger Nichols, who went onto a career in public service after he left the university, and he also was a figure who I think was influential far beyond the classroom. He seemed to be well-connected into the local political structure and did quite a bit to establish early connections between the university, the county commission, and the legislature, and was very influential on behalf of the university, in that regard. And there are, no doubt, many, many more that I'm forgetting who are worthy of mention. But, you know, the brain cells.

AH: So when did you start with your reengagement of the university? You were obviously very busy in business. When did you become involved again?

JG: My friend Steve Anderson became president of the alumni association in, I want to say, 1982 or 1983. And he called on me to get involved in some of what the alumni association was doing at that time. One of his special projects was to engage a number of alumni in a program they called the Name Scholars Program. I don't know if they still have it or not, but it calls upon individuals and businesses to make a commitment for a period of years, to fund a scholarship. My wife and I looked at our experiences at the university, the fact that we'd been out a few years and that we had the capacity to do that at that point, and agreed to do that. About the same time, the university was making some pretty good progress in intercollegiate basketball. We had some good teams that we put on the court. It was very exciting. There wasn't as much competition for the attention of sports fans or entertainment-seekers in Tampa, and the basketball game at the Sun Dome was, really, an exciting night out.

And so, we began to attend those games and would run into people that we hadn't seen in quite a while. Throughout that period of time, I also maintained contacts with fellows that had been in the fraternity with me during the time that I was here. And a number of them, coincidentally, were in related businesses to mine. So we had the opportunity to engage in business that kept us in touch. And, as we would stay in touch, it just seemed natural that we would take an interest in what was going on at the campus at that point. In the mid '80s, we found some crack in the ice, regarding fraternity housing on campus, and engaged in that process that ran on for, oh, almost 20 years before the university finally got serious about it. We were serious about it 20 years ago, but I think the university paid a lot of lip service and very little real attention to that as something that they wanted to see happen on campus. They didn't want to tell us no because they wanted to keep us engaged, but they really didn't want to see that kind of thing happen on our schedule. They wanted to have it happen in their time.

AH: Well, it is beautiful, after all, though.

JG: Yeah, actually, they've done a nice job with it. It's only disappointing in that it's very homogenized; there's very little opportunity for individual expression. There's very little opportunity for a group to showcase its excellence, its strengths. A lot of the groups have different areas that they would excel in. Yet there seems to be a prejudice towards not allowing student organizations to be competitive, to not allow any one group to rise much above any of the other groups. I suppose there's a good reason for that in someone's mind. It's not the kind of thing that you hope happens in real life. You hope, once you leave the campus, that excellence is rewarded. That ability is showcased. That talent and success are things that you're encouraged to achieve.

AH: And competition, too, yeah.

JG: And competition.

AH: Incidentally, you talk about foot-dragging things. The same would go for our student-run radio station. I guess, about the time that you were on your way out, WUSF was, kind of, changing formats, forcibly, from the top.

JG: Yes, I think that's correct. And WUSF is on one of those buttons on my dial. I get over there fairly often.

AH: Yeah. It definitely provides something nice, but it's definitely the antithesis of a student station, in that classical until eleven at night.

JG: Yes.

AH: Let me see. So you became involved, then, with the alumni center?

JG: Yeah, they started a campaign for the alumni center about the time that my commitment to the Name Scholars Program wrapped up. And Joe Tomaino was the director of alumni affairs at the time. And I think he saw that there was an opportunity to get me to extend my commitment by participating in the funding drive for the Gibbons Center, which I was happy to do. It's a lovely place. Today, a recent expansion has, I think, increased the utility of the building. In fact, we've held meetings for the foundation there. [It's a] very nice facility and one that is good to have on campus. Just a little aside, it's next door to Lifsey House, which is usually mistaken by my friends as, perhaps, the sewage treatment plant or a motor pool or something like that. I'm not a fan of the architecture in the Lifsey House.

AH: I'm not aware that there are any fans, actually.

JG: I'm sure there's at least one. (both laugh) Somebody, somewhere designed it. And, like many of the buildings on campus, it wasn't done in a vacuum; there was a competition held. That was the one that got the votes, which, I guess, is why they call it "Camel or horse designed by a committee."

AH: Yeah, well, that's one of the touchier topics, I think, for planners around here.

JG: Yes, I'm sure it is. But, after being involved in the Gibbons Center program, we achieved a major milestone. We extended that movement that started in my day, towards intercollegiate athletics, by adding intercollegiate football. One of my fraternity brothers, Charlie Santana, was in the study committee that recommended that the university move ahead with intercollegiate football. And, whatever detractors existed, 10 years ago, to that concept, I can't imagine that they continue to be detractors today. It really has become the marketing department for the university. There was been a very, very wide recognition of the fact that the University of South Florida is in Tampa, not Lakeland, not Miami. And the campus has gotten some wonderful exposure. With our entry, next year, into the Big East Conference<sup>17</sup>, we'll be getting exposure in one of the most densely populated markets in the United States, certainly on the East Coast of the United States. I think that will assist the university in everything, from attracting faculty to some of the most highly qualified students. I mean, my gosh. If you're in upstate New York, and you've got a chance to come to the University of South Florida in Tampa and get a good education and a nice campus life as well, that's pretty doggone attractive.

AH: Sure. Yeah, and with a leader like Lee Roy Selmon, getting the resources together and putting together—at least, until recently, he was with this—

JG: Well, Leroy, of course, continues with the university. And all his initial engagement as an assistant athletic director—his move to athletic director brought a focus on the football program. I was fortunate enough to attend the induction ceremonies in Kenton, Ohio, when Leroy was made a member of the football hall of fame. I can tell you that the man is regarded very well, not only within his own community here, but among people throughout what had been his business—professional football. He truly is looked up to as a man who sets a tremendous example for how to conduct oneself during your career and afterwards. And his affiliation with the university's football program was one of the two most important things that happened with that program. The other was the hiring of Jim Leavitt, who has turned out to be a tremendous asset to this university and, I think, truly, an inspiring individual to his players. I think that Coach Levitt is a rare find. We acquired him as an assistant coach, with hopefully a great future in front of him, and he's exceeded all expectations.

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<sup>17</sup>The Big East Conference is a collegiate athletic conference that competes in NCAA Division I in all sports except football, which is not sponsored.

AH: Well, and now we have a new, huge athletic facility over there that's going to be a help on training, et cetera, and office space. We'll get people out of portables, et cetera.

JG: Sure.

AH: So, what else? Bring us up to the present day? Is there anything else that we've—?

JG: Well, when the football program started, one of the commitments that the university made was to establish an endowment that would mean that they wouldn't be scrapping for cash to try and salvage a program that didn't start well. Leroy was very much involved, along with the president and any number of other people from the campus in putting together the funds. They put together a program called The First Team, which my wife and I joined, that assisted in putting together the funding to ensure that, when the football program started, that it started on the right foot. And I think that was very prudent of them. Paul Griffin, who was the athletic director at the time, was a man who was very fiscally conservative, very insistent that the money be taken care of and that the community make a commitment that demonstrated its support to the program. And I think that's worked well for the program.

AH: Definitely.

JG: Since that time, I was asked to serve on the university foundation board. A number of the people on the board were people that I had known from business, particularly, Hinks and Jim Shimberg, who have been great supporters of the university, who I've had the privilege to work with on a number of business transactions. They set an example for what philanthropy is all about, together with some of the other people that sit on the foundation board, currently, people like Frank Morsani and Gus Stavros. There are just so many people who have really taken an interest in this university and helped make it a part of the community and advanced the programs of the university, whether they're student life programs like athletics or academic programs or programs that explore the issues of the day or address the needs of the community, whether it's the medical school or the school of architecture and urban planning.

There's really been, in the last few years—since, I would say, Betty Castor's tenure as president of the university—a growing connection between the university and the community. Part of it, I guess, is that the community just kind of grew out to surround the university. It's not, "That place up there," anymore. It's now a part of the true Tampa metropolitan area, surrounded by the corporate city limits of the city of Tampa, that extends up into New Tampa. And the number of dollars of payroll and economic impact generated by the university each year would be sorely missed in this community if it were ever lost. So the foundation is the place that that connection between community and university really seems to take shape. And it's been a really interesting experience and a very rewarding experience to be a part of that.

AH: So what kind of business do you take care of, I mean, if you have a board meeting? Give us an example of some of the things that might be on the agenda.

JG: You know, the foundation has organized in the last couple of years into a number of working groups. And, my first year on the foundation board, I was involved with student life and the nominating committee. The student life portion of the foundation touched on everything from Greek housing and was involved in putting together the financial support for the bonds that had built the dormitories that had been added to the university recently, the Greek housing that was added to the university, the athletic center that you mentioned. The foundation provides the credit enhancement for those programs that enables the university to put out bonds at very favorable interest rates and engage in those kinds of building programs. The nominating committee is largely an internal matter to the foundation, but it involves the members seeking out people in the community who can help strengthen that relationship between the community and the university and, frankly, people who can, on their own, make a big impact on things at the university, if they find an interest in something that enables them to express their philanthropy.

Personally, this year, I've been involved in a bit more mundane stuff. The audit committee, which has kind of been in the spotlight this year because there have been—at other universities around the country and two in Florida—scandals involving the misappropriation of funds that had been donated for one purpose and used for another. So the university foundation has taken very seriously its obligation to be good custodians of the money that people give to the university to ensure that it's spent as it was intended, to ensure that it's carefully guarded against any kind of impropriety. The term of a foundation board member is three years. Next year, I don't know what my role will be because there are several other working groups. At the board meeting at the foundation, you hear from each of these working groups and, from time to time, are called upon to cast a vote in favor or against something that has been proposed by one of the working groups. But the role of the foundation is to enhance the mission of the university through attracting the resources from the community.

AH: Well, you know, it's just more important than ever as we go on. The university foundation was formed way back in the beginning, when we got our first donations. But it's become more important as support from the state kind of wanes a little bit. There's not quite as much money to go around as before, so the community has really become a big part of continuing to go forward, you know, progress on the campus.

JG: Well, and that's another part of the foundation's job, to use the influence of people within the community to encourage the legislature to support the programs of the university. Because they're not just programs for the university; they're programs for the community as well. But, yes, there is a shift in the emphasis of spending at the higher education level. It has become more competitive. We're all painfully aware of the difficulty of making budgets meet when there are

always more needs and, at the same time, a bias in favor of no new taxes. So the foundation has its work cut out for it.

AH: Oh, definitely. More important than ever.

JG: As do the poor parents of entering students, (AH laughs) who are likely to see higher tuition rates than any before.

AH: Yeah, well, when taxes aren't raised, tuition is.

JG: Yes.

AH: You know, another factor, too, that occurs to me as you're talking is so many more parts of the university really do have an impact on the community now. You know, football and the athletics is a huge part of it but also all the medical programs. The nursing, where nurses are being trained out at the various hospitals, the research on all kinds of medical problems, the college of public health, all of these things are really spreading out their influence into the community. So you have this exchange, like, really, never before.

JG: Well, and not just our community. The College of Public Health is not something that you find just anywhere. USF is a virtually exclusive area to study public health as an independent field a study. Dean Darby(??) had a number of programs that he initiated that directly addressed the providers of public health and how they interface. We taught nurses; we taught doctors. We didn't teach nurses how to work with doctors, or doctors how to work with nurses, and that's one of the things that, at the College of Public Health, they've undertaken to do.

AH: Yeah, so this exchange between the community and the university could scarcely be imagined in your day. I mean, the types of things that were going on then were significant, but this is such a larger scale and touching lives in so many different ways than before. And one of the things I'd like to briefly discuss, too is, do you think they way that people view the university is miles away from before? I mean, there was a certain amount of distrust, it seems, in the '60s, that you had the liberal professors; you had the long-haired students making noise. And even if these people were a minority, they were the most vocal part of the university community. So it seems like there was a certain amount of distrust. And let's face it, Tampa was a fairly conservative town. And you smack dab, in the middle of Hillsborough County, put this new university. There's a certain amount of distrust. Do you think that's true? And do you think that all that's been overcome over time?

JG: Oh, absolutely not. I think you only have to turn the pages back about a year to find the Sami Al-Arian<sup>18</sup> episode as a manifestation of that same suspicion between certain elements of the community and certain elements of the university. You'll seldom find anyone who is more liberal about your business and conservative about his than a university professor. They hold up academic freedom as though it were a sacred, guaranteed, constitutional right, perhaps even God-given.

AH: If they believe in that sort of thing. (laughs)

JG: They do when it suits their purpose. (AH laughs) So there's certainly going to be, always, some friction between town and gown. There will be a certain amount of suspicion that goes both ways. And yet, more and more people are finding their lives personally touched by the university. You currently look at the Tampa Bay area: one out of every four people who holds a college degree living in the Tampa Bay area got it here. My own doctor was a member of the first class at the medical school here at the University of South Florida. There is hardly anyone in the community who doesn't have a relative or a close friend who attended the University of South Florida. So, as that continues, there will be an increasing improvement in the relationships between the university and the community because you're less likely to be suspicious of something with which you have a personal experience.

AH: Sure. And not just people getting their degrees from here, but more and more people working.

JG: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

AH: But it's interesting. You brought up Al-Arian. I appreciate how forthright you've been throughout this interview, and just the way that something like that can rekindle the old feelings of this distrust and this elitism, and the feeling of this entitlement among professors and bringing up red-herring arguments about academic freedom. And things like that can kind of turn back the clock 10 or 20 years, as far as the way people think. And it might not last too long, and eventually it blows over. But, obviously, there has been that progress there, where more and more of the community is finding that their interests do lie here at USF.

JG: Yeah, and there are other things that are happening, other steps that are being taken. I saw, just last week in the [*Tampa Bay*] *Business Journal* that Judy Genshaft had taken over as incoming chairman of the Committee of 100<sup>19</sup>, which is a business development group of large

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<sup>18</sup>Sami Al-Arian was a professor at USF from 1986 to 2001. In 2003, the federal grand jury indicted Al-Arian for violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

<sup>19</sup>Formerly a part of the Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the Committee of 100 is now an independent body called the Florida Council of 100. The Florida Council of 100 is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of business

companies and prominent businesspeople within the Tampa Bay area. That kind of affiliation can only help the university in the long-run. It's a very good step for her to have taken. The foundation board today, I think, has a very good, representative mix of people who have a direct affiliation with the university staff, faculty, and the prominent business people from throughout the community. There are representatives of most of the major employers in the Tampa Bay area on the foundation board.

I think they, more than anyone perhaps, appreciate what the university contributes to the community because they see it in their workforce. That's one of the great experiences that I had with the university. Over the years, as I built my business, I recruited regularly from the university. I had, oh, probably a dozen students who I first had contact with through some activity here at the university, who I employed later on, many of them directly out of school. I think, if other people caught on to the way I was recruiting, you'd see a lot more of it. I had, probably, four university ambassadors who are all not only typically good students but also leaders among their contemporaries. And if they lead among their contemporaries during their time here as students, I think it's reasonable to expect that they'll lead among their contemporaries when they're in the business world and, probably, for the rest of their lives.

AH: Yeah. It's interesting. I mean, you fit into that pattern yourself. You mentioned Steve Anderson; I've done an interview with Les Miller, who has gone on to be influential in politics here in Florida. So the university experience is, really, becoming one of those bedrocks of becoming an adult and ushering you, not just into the workforce, but just into your personal passions in life. Is that what you found?

JG: Sure. Sure. My career track fell fairly far away from the academic world, but I have enjoyed my continuing contact with the university and found it helpful to me in my business, through the people who I have met, the people who I have recruited and have come to work for me. And, just in the course of business through sharing a common experience with a number of other people, it's not unusual if I happen to be wearing a lapel pin or a polo shirt with a USF logo on it that someone will say, "Oh, you went to USF? What year?" "Oh, I graduated in '83 or '67," or whatever the number was.

AH: Yeah, I also find it interesting that, being in construction and now developing communities, that you're sitting on the board of the foundation and overseeing construction here and developing a sense of community here. So it must be kind of an interesting fit for you, that so much between your work here, your service here, and your career outside seem to kind of mesh. Do you ever get that feeling?

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leaders, which exists to promote the economic growth of Florida and improve the economic well-being and quality of life of its citizenry.

JG: It's a good fit. The things that happen here have a big impact on all of our lives, here in the bay area.

AH: Well, anything that you think we've missed? We certainly covered a lot of ground here.

JG: We did, indeed. Do you do a lot of two-tape interviews?

AH: No, they're rare. So it took one to cover your time as a student and one to cover your subsequent career and all of these colorful personalities you remember so well.

JG: Well, I can honestly say that the time I was here as a student, it was interesting times. It was not really an experience that I would characterize as fun. It certainly wasn't carefree. But it was stimulating, and those times had a way of demanding that people mature early and consider things well beyond themselves. It was, truly, interesting times.

AH: Well, before we conclude, I usually like to ask people to give a statement for someone who—for the people who might be interesting in getting into college, not sure what they want to do. What advice would you give an aspiring student today, graduating from high school?

JG: For a student graduating from high school, if you're inclined to pursue your academic interests, come on. If you've got other things to do, this can wait. But don't give it up. Because the times spent here include, not only lessons in the classroom, but can include very valuable lessons in life. It's a wonderful opportunity if you do come straight from high school to the university, to enter a world that's filled with so many different things than you've experienced up to that point. You can expand very rapidly, much more rapidly than you would entering the workforce and simply spending your time in a relatively narrow environment. Here, they demand of you a certain breadth to your educational experience. It might not make any sense, at the time, as to why an engineer needs to take a course in issues in music or classic silent films, but I assure you that you will, later in life, say, "Oh, I know what they're talking about," and it will have been worthwhile to have spent the time in attaining that liberal education that a university like this offers. If you don't have the time now, take it up later. But, if you can, it's a great way to spend those first four years out of high school.

AH: Well, and two of the words that you mentioned, I think, are particularly significant: breadth and worthwhile. And, certainly, just through our roving conversation here, today, we see a certain breadth in your life, from a part in *Twelfth Night*, all the way to the board of the foundation. It certainly sounds like it's been worthwhile for you and for us. Thank you for being here today.

JG: Well, thank you.

*End of interview*